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19 December 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: DDA Meeting with HPSCI Staff Members on Former Spouse Benefits

1. Rae Huffstutler, DDA, Russ Bruemmer, General Counsel, Royal Elmendorf, D/OP, [] OCA, and I met with Mike O'Neil, HPSCI staff member, on 19 December 1988 to discuss Mr. O'Neil's concerns about the Agency's administration of former spouse benefits. The meeting was a followup to an earlier one between Mr. O'Neil, Mr. Bruemmer and [] on the same subject and to a DDA letter sent to Mr. O'Neil describing some new initiatives in this area.

2. Mr. O'Neil voiced many of the same concerns that had been raised in the earlier meeting with Mr. Bruemmer. He indicated that many former spouses were not getting information on the benefits available despite our efforts. He cited an instance [] where spouses had not seen a notice requiring their endorsement. He also said that former spouses were frustrated in their attempts to find someone in the Agency to answer their questions. Mr. Huffstutler acknowledged his determination to do a better job of addressing former spouse concerns and outlined several procedures underway to deal with those problems. He cited the development of a procedure to inform spouses of their rights when an employee was designated into CIARDS; briefing spouses on their benefits as part of their overseas processing; expanded efforts to advertise new benefits or changes; and the designation of a referent to deal with former spouses questions. Mr. Huffstutler indicated that we had problems contacting spouses who divorced employees after retirement. Mr. O'Neil also said that former spouses were concerned about the placement of the advisory board cited in Mr. Huffstutler's letter; they wanted to be sure that their views would get to the people who could take action. Mr. Huffstutler said that he would not chair the group, but would meet with it from time to time as would Mr. Elmendorf. They both would also receive reports and any written recommendations from the board.

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3. Mr. O'Neil then used the occasion to raise some other issues:

--What did we think about the benefits discussed in the NAPA report?

Mr. Huffstutler said that he did not recall it addressed the need for more benefits, rather that some other members of the intelligence community needed some of our special authority. He also raised our hope to try a flexible benefit plan to meet the varied needs of our employees.

--What had we decided on [] allowances?

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Mr. Huffstutler indicated that we were in the process of developing a position and would send something to the Committee soon. Mr. O'Neil indicated that he thought the FBI plan was too costly and that some staff members would [] meet with employees and discuss benefits in January.

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--What did he think about the Committee's response on []

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According to Mr. O'Neil, the committee felt there was no reason to depart from the past. It was determined in the mid-70's that [] the Agency should use its special authorities to offset any inconveniences to employees.

25X1

Mr. Huffstutler indicated that he was not familiar with the situation. Mr. Bruemmer said that we were in the process of developing a response.

I provided Mr. Huffstutler with some background on the proposal outlining the DO's rationale for recommending CIARDS coverage. I also reiterated the Committee's reasons for opposing these changes.

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